United Nations S/PV.3963

Security Council

Fifty-fourth Year

Provisional

3963rd Meeting
Thursday, 7 January 1999, 6.55 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Amorim	(Brazil)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Petrella
	Bahrain	Mr. Al-Mansoor
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Minton

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

99-85003 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 6.55 p.m.

Expression of welcome to the new members of the Security Council and of thanks to the outgoing members

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council to be held this year, I should like to wish a happy new year to all members of the Security Council as well as to all Members of the United Nations and to the Secretariat. On behalf of the Council, I welcome the new members of the Council: Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia and the Netherlands. We all look forward with confidence to their participation in the work of the Council. We are convinced that their experience and wisdom will be of invaluable assistance in the discharge of the Council's enormous responsibilities.

I should like also to express the Council's deep gratitude to the outgoing members for their important and decisive contributions to its work. The representatives of Costa Rica, Japan, Kenya, Portugal and Sweden have all, in an excellent manner, contributed their talents to the business of the Council.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of January 1999, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Jassim Mohammed Buallay, Permanent Representative of Bahrain to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of December 1998. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Buallay for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

I should like also to express our appreciation for the cooperation extended to us in our work by Counsellor Liu Jieyi of China, who I understand is leaving us.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Sierra Leone in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dabor (Sierra Leone) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have received photocopies of letters dated 6 January 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Liberia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council and 7 January 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Togo to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, which will be issued as documents of the Security Council under the symbols S/1999/17 and S/1999/18, respectively.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its grave concern at the attacks by armed rebels of the former junta and Revolutionary United Front in the capital of Sierra Leone, and at the resulting suffering and loss of life. It condemns the unacceptable attempt by the rebels to overthrow by violence the democratically elected Government of Sierra Leone. The Council also condemns the rebels' continued campaign to terrorize the population of Sierra Leone and especially the atrocities committed against women and children. The Council demands that the rebels lay down their arms immediately and cease all violence. The Council reiterates once more its firm support for the legitimate and democratically elected Government of President Kabbah.

"The Security Council strongly condemns all those who have afforded support, including through the supply of arms and mercenaries, to the rebels in Sierra Leone. In this context, it expresses its grave

concern at reports that such support to the rebels is being afforded in particular from the territory of Liberia. It reaffirms the obligation on all Member States to comply strictly with existing arms embargoes. In that context, the Security Council urges the Committee created pursuant to resolution 985 (1995) and the Committee created pursuant to resolution 1132 (1997) to pursue active measures to investigate violations of the embargoes and to report to the Council, with recommendations as appropriate.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of dialogue and national reconciliation for the restoration of lasting peace and stability to Sierra Leone. The Council welcomes the efforts to resolve the conflict being undertaken by the Government of President Kabbah, and further endorses the approach set out in the final communiqué of the meeting in Abidjan of the Committee of Six on Sierra Leone of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) of 28 December 1998 (S/1998/1236). It welcomes the offers made by leaders in the region aimed at resolving the conflict and in that context urges them, including the ECOWAS Committee of Six, to facilitate the peace process. It also calls on the Secretary-General to do all he can to assist in these efforts, including through his Special Representative.

"The Security Council also expresses its concern at the serious humanitarian consequences of the escalating fighting in Sierra Leone. It calls on all States and international organizations to provide appropriate humanitarian assistance and on all parties in Sierra Leone to afford humanitarian access. The Council notes that United Nations agencies are working with the increasing numbers of refugees in neighbouring countries and calls on all States to ensure that the humanitarian agencies are adequately resourced to meet the additional demand.

"The Security Council commends the forces of the Military Observer Group of West African States in Sierra Leone for the courage and determination they have demonstrated over the last year in their efforts to maintain security in Sierra Leone. It also commends the key contribution of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in efforts to restore stability in the country. The Council urges all States urgently to provide resources, including logistical and other support, to help maintain an effective peacekeeping presence in Sierra Leone.

"The Security Council expresses its intention to continue to monitor the situation closely and to consider urgently any further action which may be necessary."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1999/1.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.